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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

"Let them hate so long as they fear"

Skulls. Black cats. A naked woman riding a killer whale. Grim reapers. Snakes. Swords. Occult symbols. A wizard with a staff that shoots lightning bolts. Moons. Stars. A dragon holding the Earth in its claws.

No, this is not the fantasy world of a 12-year-old boy.

It is, according to a new book, part of the hidden reality behind the Pentagon's classified, or "black," budget that delivers billions of dollars to stealthy armies of high-tech warriors. The book offers a glimpse of this dark world through a revealing lens - patches - the kind worn on military uniforms.

Military officials and experts said the patches are real if often unofficial efforts at building team spirit.

The classified budget of the Defense Department, concealed from the public in all but outline, has nearly doubled in the Bush years, to \$32 billion. That is more than the combined budgets of the Food and Drug Administration, the National Science Foundation and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Those billions have expanded a secret world of advanced science and technology in which military units and federal contractors push back the frontiers of warfare. In the past, such handiwork has produced some of the most advanced jets, weapons and spy satellites, as well as notorious boondoggles.

Budget documents tell little. This year, for instance, the Pentagon says Program Element 0603891c is receiving \$196 million but will disclose nothing about what the project does. Private analysts say it apparently aims at developing space weapons.

Trevor Paglen, an artist and photographer finishing his Ph.D. in geography at the University of California, Berkeley, has managed to document some of this hidden world. The 75 patches he has assembled reveal a bizarre mix of high and low culture where Latin and Greek mottos frame images of spooky demons and sexy warriors, of dragons dropping bombs and skunks firing laser beams.

"Oderint Dum Metuant," reads a patch for an Air Force program that mines spy satellite images for battlefield intelligence, according to Mr. Paglen, who identifies the saying as from Caligula, the first-century Roman emperor famed for his depravity. It translates "Let them hate so long as they fear."

The book's title? *I Could Tell You but Then You Would Have to Be Destroyed by Me*. Mr. Paglen says the title is the Latin translation of a patch designed for the Navy Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 4, at Point Mugu, Calif. Its mission, he says, is to test strike aircraft, conventional weapons and electronic warfare equipment and to develop tactics to use the high-tech armaments in war.

Mr. Paglen said he found [the patches] by touring bases, noting what personnel wore, joining alumni associations, interviewing active and former team members, talking to base historians and filing requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

What sparked his interest were Vice President Dick Cheney's remarks as the Pentagon and World Trade Center smoldered. He said the nation would engage its "dark side" to find the attackers and justice. "We've got to spend time in the shadows," Mr. Cheney said. "It's going to be vital for

us to use any means at our disposal, basically, to achieve our objective."

Mr. Paglen said that remark revived memories of his childhood when his military family traveled the globe to bases often involved in secret missions. "I'd go out drinking with Special Forces guys," he recalled. "I was 15, and they were 20, and they could never say where they were coming from or what they were doing. You were just around the stuff."

Intrigued by Mr. Cheney's remarks as well as his own recollections, Mr. Paglen set off to map the secret world and document its expansion. He traveled widely across the Southwest, where the military keeps many secret bases. His labors resulted in his Ph.D. thesis as well as a book, *Blank Spots on a Map*, that Dutton plans to publish next year.

Mr. Paglen became fascinated by the patches and started collecting them and displaying them at talks and shows. A breakthrough occurred around 2004, when he visited Peter Merlin, an "aerospace archaeologist" who works in the Mojave Desert not far from a sprawling military base. Mr. Merlin argued that the lightning bolts, stars and other symbols could be substantive clues about unit numbers and operating locations, as well as the purpose of hidden programs.

"These symbols," Mr. Paglen wrote, "were a language. If you could begin to learn its grammar, you could get a glimpse into the secret world itself."

His book explores this idea and seeks to decode the symbols. Many patches show the Greek letter sigma, which Mr. Paglen identifies as a technical term for how well an object

reflects radar waves, a crucial parameter in developing stealthy jets.

A patch from a Groom Lake unit shows the letter sigma with the "buster" slash running through it, as in the movie "Ghost Busters." "Huge Deposit - No Return" reads its caption. Huge Deposit, Mr. Paglen writes, "indicates the bomb load deposited by the bomber on its target, while 'No Return' refers to the absence of a radar return, meaning the aircraft was undetectable to radar."

Mr. Paglen said his favorite patch was the dragon holding the Earth in its claws, its wings made of American flags and its mouth wide open, baring its fangs. He said it came from the National Reconnaissance Office, which oversees developing spy satellites. "There's something both belligerent and weirdly self-critical about it," he remarked. "It's representing the U.S. as a dragon with the whole world in its clutches."

Mr. Paglen said. "This stuff [clandestine military activity] is a huge industry, I mean a huge industry. And it's remarkable that you can develop these projects on an industrial scale, and we don't know what they are. It's an astounding feat of social engineering."

-- New York Times, April 1, 2008

Quote of the Month

"You can be a convicted felon and legally possess a shotgun in Maryland." That gem came from the U.S. attorney's office in an *Examiner* interview with the U.S. Attorney herself, Patricia Jessamy, as published March 24th. We hate to think of someone in such a position of authority as ignorant, so the most generous explanation we can think of for that grotesquely untrue statement is that we apparently have so many gun laws on the books that those charged with enforcing them simply lose track. (Note to Patty: gun disability for felons goes back at least 40 years.) What's tragic is that she used the interview to beg for more laws. Would she even notice if new gun laws were put on the books? -- *Tripwire*, April 2008

Time to Stop BATFE Abuses (Again)

By Chris W. Cox, NRA/ILA Executive Director

A bill, H.R. 4900, was introduced in January by Reps. Steve King (R-Iowa) and Zack Space (D-Ohio), aimed at one problem: Around the country, gun stores have been

threatened with closure over minor, unintentional record-keeping violations.

Among them -- and certainly the most outspoken, through owner Ryan Horsley's widely read blog on the Internet -- is Red's Trading Post in Twin Falls, Idaho. Red's has been a family business since 1936. After giving Red's a clean bill of health in a 2001 inspection, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) found record-keeping errors in 2005, and began proceedings to revoke Red's federal firearms license (FFL).

When Red's challenged BATFE in court, the agency forcefully defended its decision, even though the federal judge hearing the case noted that some of the alleged violations were "double counted" and that "the amount and nature of the alleged violations, taken in comparison with Red's total annual sales, does not raise a serious concern to public safety." (Red's case is still pending, with a trial expected this year.)

Since an FFL can only be revoked for "willful" violations, most cases turn on BATFE's definition of the term "willful." Congress added the "willfulness" requirement in the Firearms Owners' Protection Act (FOPA) of 1986, to end similar abuses. BATFE has gotten around that change by arguing that a violation is "willful" any time a dealer repeats a mistake after a warning. It's easy for BATFE to rack up "violations" when they include errors like not recording the buyer's county of residence--even where the buyer's city and county have the same name and boundaries.

The bill would end that problem by defining "willful" violations to mean intentional, purposeful violations of the law. It would also streamline the appeal process to give dealers a better chance to defend themselves in court.

There have been other new attacks on FFLs. BATFE agents continue to tell gunsmiths they must be licensed as "manufacturers," even though the Gun Control Act clearly states that common gunsmithing tasks such as "repairing firearms or ... making or fitting special barrels, stocks, or trigger mechanisms to firearms" may be performed on a dealer's license. Gunsmiths have even been told that engraving or rebluing a firearm is "manufacturing." NRA/ILA and the NRA Civil Rights Defense Fund are supporting one gunsmith's challenge to these BATFE claims.

Even more bizarre, some

BATFE officials have told gunsmiths that they'll have to register with the State Department as manufacturers of "defense articles," subject to a \$1,750 registration fee. (The State Department rejects nearly 50% of registration requests.)

H.R. 4900 would fix this problem, too, by clarifying the definition of "manufacturer" and "dealer" to make clear, once and for all, that gunsmithing isn't manufacturing.

I've personally committed myself to winning these reforms. This winter, I wrote to BATFE Acting Director Michael Sullivan to state my concern about his agency's "overly restrictive legal interpretations and overly zealous enforcement activities."

I went on to promise Acting Director Sullivan that NRA would continue to push for a legislative fix to the problems we've encountered with his agency. That's what we did with the Firearms Owners' Protection Act of 1986. That bill took an eight-year battle in Congress, including the use of a discharge petition -- a procedural maneuver to yank a bill from the grip of a hostile committee chairman. These petitions rarely succeed, so passage of FOPA was truly a history-making event for NRA and the Congress alike. [Nonetheless BATF, as BATFE was then known, has refused to follow the intent of the law. -- Ed.]

--NRA/ILA Grassroots Alert, Vol. 15, No. 18, May 2, 2008

Some Answers to Often Asked Questions of Anti-Gunners

By Massad Ayoob

It has become increasingly politically incorrect to be a firearms owner. This is because trends tend to be set by the fashionable and the media-connected in metropolitan environments. Gun ownership per capita is well under 50% in urban areas of this country. Nationwide, it is estimated that one half of all homes contain at least one firearm. In rural areas, gun ownership well exceeds 50%, and on the frontiers and in the true backwoods home, gun ownership will generally be found to reach 90%.

When your beliefs and values are challenged, you want ready answers. The following have worked for me when debating the civil rights of gun owners.

Isn't the Second Amendment about the National Guard? Frankly, no. Serious legal scholars have almost universally agreed that the Second

In the beginning of change the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, however, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot. -- Mark Twain

Amendment speaks to the rights of the citizens, not the rights of the states or other communities. Doesn't it seem incongruous that the Framers would have written [only] one states' rights amendment into a Bill of Rights that otherwise speaks entirely to the rights of individuals? Besides, consider that the document in question [the Bill of Rights] was written at a time when the gunfire of the American Revolution was still ringing in the ears of the Framers. A "national guard" of the period would have been Tories loyal to King George, hardly an entity the freedom fighters who wrote the Bill of Rights would have wanted to empower. Historically, you'll also find that the constitutions written by the separate colonies prior to the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights spoke of firearms ownership specifically as an individual right encompassing personal protection, and not just a tool to facilitate state militias.

Isn't a gun just a phallic symbol? If it was, no man would ever have bought one with a two inch barrel.

What about the argument that people die in domestic arguments because a gun is within reach of an angry person? When asked this question, I always respond with a question: "Could you pick up a gun and kill someone you love because they angered you?" If the answer is No, I reply, "Then how dare you imply that I, and everyone else, would be that unstable?" If the answer is Yes, I suggest they stop attempting to counsel well-adjusted people and immediately seek psychiatric counseling for their own self-admitted tendency toward acting out impulses of uncontrollable violence.

Won't criminals just take your self defense gun and shoot you with it instead? That has happened, but rarely. It occurs more often with police, whose openly worn service handguns come quickly to the mind and the hand of the high number of criminals they face in the course of their work. If you're worried about it, take a course in handgun retention, the art and science of defeating a physical disarming attempt. Most of this training is limited to cops, but private citizens can take such classes on the East coast from LFI (1-800-624-9049) or on the West coast from Firearms Academy of Seattle (1-800-FAS-AMMO).

How can one morally keep a lethal weapon when the Fifth Commandment states, "Thou shalt not kill." That's not what it actually says. Biblical scholars seem unanimously agreed that in the original Hebrew, the commandment said, "Lo Tirtzah, Thou shalt not commit

murder," i.e., thou shalt not kill with evil intent. This is not an exclusively Judeo-Christian ethos. The Bible, the Talmud, the Koran, and the Book of Mormon all make it clear that there are times when it is both justifiable and necessary for the good to use lethal force against the evil. Provisions for justifiable homicide have existed in every body of law in the history of civilized Man: the Code of Hammurabi, the Napoleonic Code, the English common law, the Dutch-Roman model. From communist nations to capitalist, from the First World to the Third, it has been universally understood that every human being has the right to use lethal force against any individual who unlawfully threatens their life or limb with killing or crippling intent.

Don't all the police favor gun control? No. A number of high profile police chiefs have espoused gun banning schemes, but they're usually mouthing the platforms of the politicians who appointed them, and in whose good graces they must stay if they don't want to be demoted back to Captain, usually the highest rank protected by civil service laws. In rural areas, polls show, most police chiefs and sheriffs support citizens' rights to be armed against violent criminals. Polls of working street cops routinely show the overwhelming majority favor the rights of the citizens to keep and bear arms. Indeed, most cops make sure there's a gun at home with their significant other for family protection while they're at work.

There isn't space here to go into all the specious arguments used by those who would take from you your right to own firearms if you choose. If you find yourself debating the issue, many publications of the Second Amendment Foundation will give you ample ammunition. You can call them for information on literature and membership at (206) 454 7012, or write SAF, 12500 N.E. Tenth Place, Bellevue, WA 98005. -- *Massad Ayoob teaches armed self defense classes around the country to both police officers and civilians. For information, write to LFI, PO Box 122, Concord, NH 03302, or call toll free 1-800-624-9049*

-- Source: *Backwoods Home Magazine*
home page, www.backwoodshome.com

"Press 1 for English?"

Fed up with "Press 1 for English?"

Senator Elizabeth Dole (R-NC) is trying to do something about it.

She has introduced a bill, S. 2719, to repeal Presidential Executive Order 13166, which forces government

offices and federal contractors to provide services in multiple languages.

The order -- which was never debated or approved by Congress -- is an attempt by government bureaucrats to force multilingualism on the American people without their consent.

The Office of Management and Budget estimates it already costs taxpayers billions of dollars annually. When fully implemented, the cost will be astronomical.

For example doctors and hospitals participating in Medicare face government prosecution if they fail to provide interpreters for non-English speaking patients free of charge. The order also covers state and local government agencies.

The American people or their elected representatives never voted to transform the United States into a multicultural 'Tower of Babel.'

TAKE ACTION

Urge your senators to repeal Exec. Order 13166.

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<http://capwiz.com/proenglish/issues/alert/?alertid=11255616>

ProEnglish, 1601 N. Kent St., Suite 1100, Arlington, VA 22209. Phone: (703) 816-8821. Email: proenglish.org

Religion Is Child Abuse?

Article 14 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that the government shall "respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion," and shall also "respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child."

A proponent of the CRC, law professor Jonathan Todres believes that Article 14 "provides for the role of parents in teaching religion to their children, while ensuring that the government does not impose restrictions on any child's right to freedom of religion."

On its face, Article 14 may seem to support the role of parents, but such a position is merely wishful thinking. The Convention merely recognizes the parents' primary role to "provide direction" to the child, and there is considerable disagreement on what this "direction" should entail. For example, according to Faulkner University law professor John Garman, Article 14 is one of the few clauses in the CRC that "actually brings the

parents into play to 'provide direction to the child.'"

But another CRC proponent, law professor Cynthia Price Cohen, disagrees. According to Cohen, one of the earliest drafts of Article 14 included "two paragraphs that protected the right of parents to guide the exercise of this right and to 'respect the liberty of the child and his parents' with regard to the child's religious education." When the final text was adopted, however, all language protecting the rights of parents to "ensure the religious and moral education of the child" was omitted. This omission makes no sense if the purpose of Article 14 was to protect the rights of *parents* to instruct their children.

Furthermore, there is a growing movement among American and international academics to prevent parents from "indoctrinating" their children with religious beliefs. For example, British scientist and bestselling author Richard Dawkins recently described religious "indoctrination" of young children as a form of child abuse. "Odious as the physical abuse of children by priests undoubtedly is," Dawkins writes, "I suspect that it may do them less lasting damage than the mental abuse of bringing them up Catholic in the first place."

In 1998, bestselling author and professor of psychology Nichols Humphrey, teaching at New York University, argued for "censorship" of parents, who have "no right to limit the horizons of their children's knowledge, to bring them up in an atmosphere of dogma and superstition, or to insist they follow the straight and narrow paths of their own faith."

Both authors advocate an outside solution to "protect" children from indoctrination: intervention by the government. In *The God Delusion*, Dawkins quotes from Humphrey, who writes that "children have a right not to have their minds addled by nonsense, and we as a society have a duty to protect them from it." Humphrey bluntly adds that "parents' rights have no status in ethics and should have none in law" – parenting is a "privilege" that operates within parameters set by *society* to protect the child's "fundamental rights to self determination." If parents step beyond these boundaries by indoctrinating their children, "the contract lapses – and it is then the duty of those who granted the privilege to intervene." (emphasis added)

Innaiah Narisetti of the Center for Inquiry (a U.N. NGO) said, "The time has come to debate the participation of children in religious institutions. While some might see it as a matter better left

to parents, the negative influence of religion and its subsequent contribution to child abuse from religious beliefs and practices requires us to ask whether organized religion is an institution that needs limits set on how early it should have access to children." Narisetti also said that "The UN must then take a clear stand on the issue of the forced involvement of children in religious practices; it must speak up for the rights of children and not the automatic right of parents and societies to pass on religious beliefs, and it must reexamine whether an organization like the Vatican should belong to the UN."

This aggressive censorship of parents captures the true spirit of Article 14. According to law professor Bruce Hafen, Article 14 views "parents as trustees of the state who have only such authority and discretion as the state may grant in order to protect the child's independent rights," and is consistent with what the state deems as the child's "evolving capacities." Such a calloused view of parents stands in stark contrast to our own legal tradition, which has long upheld "the fundamental interest of parents, as contrasted with that of the State, to guide the religious future and education of their children."

America's legal heritage has consistently held that *parents* have a fundamental right to teach their children about religion, shielded from well-intentioned but intrusive interference from the state. The danger of Article 14 is that it disrupts this crucial balance, tipping the scales in favor of the government and those who claim to "know better" in our society. If we wish to secure these freedoms, we must act now to place parental rights into the text of our Constitution.

Sources not linked in the article:

Jonathan Todres, "Analyzing the Opposition to the U.S. Ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child," in *The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child* (2006): 24
Cynthia Price Cohen, "Role of the United States in Drafting the Convention on the Rights of the Child," *Loyola Poverty Law Journal* (1998): 30-31
Bruce Hafen, "Abandoning Children to their Autonomy," *Harvard International Law Journal* (1996): 470
Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205, 232 (1972)

-- www.parentalrights.org, posted May 5, 2008

The Scenarios 1958 & 2008

Scenario: Johnny falls while running during recess and scrapes his

knee. He is found crying by his teacher, Mary, who hugs him to comfort him.
1958 - In a short time Johnny feels better and goes on playing.
2008 - Mary is accused of being a sexual predator and loses her job. She faces 3 years in prison. Johnny begins a 5 year therapy program. Family sues Bd. of Education for negligence in not putting down rubber padding, and is awarded \$10M for psychological trauma. All playgrounds are required to have rubber padding. Children who fall in uncushioned areas are diagnosed with ADD or Mood Swing disorder. The district requests and is granted state and federal money to hire psychiatrists to treat their disability.

Scenario: Tommy takes apart leftover firecrackers from the 4th of July, puts them in model airplane paint bottle, blows up a red ant bed.
1958 - Ants die.

2008 - BATFE, Homeland Security, FBI are notified. Johnny is charged with domestic terrorism, FBI investigates parents, siblings removed from home, computers confiscated. Tommy's parents are placed on a terror watch list and are never allowed to fly again.

Scenario: Judy has a headache and takes aspirin to school.
1958 - Judy shares aspirin with Jenny at the water cooler.

2008 - Police are called. Judy and Jenny are strip-searched and expelled for violating the zero tolerance drug policy.

Court blasts state's strip-search of children

Two children who attended a Christian school in Wisconsin were illegally strip-searched and had their constitutional rights violated by a social worker, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously ruled Monday.

In *Michael C. v. Gresbach* the court said state social worker Dana Gresbach violated the children's Fourth Amendment rights to freedom from unreasonable search when she entered Good Hope Christian Academy in Milwaukee and told them to remove their clothing when she suspected the parents of spanking in February 2004.

Stephen Crampton, vice president of legal affairs for Liberty Counsel, represented the parents of 8-year-old Ian and 9-year-old Alexis when they sued the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and the caseworker.

"The social worker performed these strip searches as a matter of routine, estimating that in perhaps one-half of the 300 or so cases she handled

every year she subjected kids to a partial disrobing," Crampton said.

The state had several social workers file affidavits saying they would have followed the same procedure. Crampton said, "That is an alarming admission, and we suspect you would find a similar pattern in social service offices all over America."

Gresbach told Principal Cheryl Reetz she needed to see Ian and Alexis. Reetz asked if she could call the children's parents, but Gresbach refused, saying she would contact them at a later time. The principal then asked if she could remain in the room to observe the interview, but she was denied permission to do so.

According to court documents state officials claimed they made efforts to speak with the parents and stepparents of the children, but the visits never occurred.

Crampton said the mindset of most social workers is that parents are the problem.

"They go to great lengths to lock parents out of the process, treating them as the enemy, and ultimately doing more harm than good by driving something of a wedge between the children and their parents," he said.

Gresbach was unable to find any sign of injury on the children's bodies.

Gresbach's behavior is not a one-time incident. In *Doe v. Carla Heck* the court addressed an eerily similar child abuse investigation where children's rights to freedom from unreasonable search were violated by the same state agency on the premises of another private educational facility.

"The problem almost always arises only in private schools," Crampton said. "Public schools, as agents of the government, routinely roll over and give social workers access to any student they wish to see without bothering to contact parents."

Gresbach claimed she was entitled to qualified immunity because her actions were reasonable under the Fourth Amendment; however, the court disagreed.

"We do not exempt child welfare workers from adhering to basic Fourth Amendment principles under non-exigent circumstances – to do so would be imprudent," the court stated. "... we do not believe that requiring a child welfare caseworker to act in accordance with basic Fourth Amendment principles is an undue burden on the child welfare system, particularly when it is necessary to conduct an examination of a child's

body, which is undoubtedly 'frightening, humiliating and intrusive' to the child."

Crampton said Christian families have the freedom to follow scriptures in administering corporal punishment and should not have their rights violated by power-hungry government officials.

"That social workers and bureaucrats don't like it is no reason to allow the trampling of the constitutional rights of parents and their children," he said. "It is the high privilege and high responsibility of parents to oversee the care, custody and education of their children, not the state."

-- WorldNet Daily, May 20, 2008

Pentagon Institute Calls Iraq War a "Major Debacle"

Washington - The war in Iraq has become "a major debacle" and the outcome "is in doubt", according to a highly critical study published by the National Defense University, the Pentagon's premier military educational institute.

The report carries considerable weight because it was written by Joseph Collins, a former senior Pentagon official, and was based in part on interviews with other former senior defense and intelligence officials who played roles in prewar preparations.

"Measured in blood and treasure, the war in Iraq has achieved the status of a major war and a major debacle," says the report's opening line.

At the time the report was written last fall, more than 4,000 U.S. and foreign troops, more than 7,500 Iraqi security forces and as many as 82,000 Iraqi civilians had been killed and tens of thousands of others wounded, while the cost of the war since March 2003 was estimated at \$450 billion.

The report said that the United States has suffered serious political costs, with its standing in the world seriously diminished.

"Compounding all of these problems, our efforts there (in Iraq) have become, at least temporarily, an incubator for terrorism," the report continued.

The report lays much of the blame for what went wrong at the feet of then-Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld. It says that in November 2001, before the war in Afghanistan was over, President Bush asked Rumsfeld "to begin planning in secret for potential military operations against Iraq."

Rumsfeld bypassed the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the report says, and

became "the direct supervisor of the combatant commanders."

In part because "long, costly, manpower-intensive post-combat operations were anathema to Rumsfeld," the report says, the U.S. was unprepared to fight what Collins calls "War B," the battle against insurgents and sectarian violence that began in mid-2003.

The report also singles out the Bush administration's national security apparatus and both of his national security advisers, Condoleezza Rice and Stephen Hadley, saying that "senior national security officials exhibited in many instances an imperious attitude, exerting power and pressure where diplomacy and bargaining might have had a better effect."

Collins ends his report by quoting Winston Churchill, who said: "Let us learn our lessons. Never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy, or that anyone who embarks on the strange voyage can measure the tides and hurricanes he will encounter. . . Always remember, however sure you are that you can easily win, that there would not be a war if the other man did not think that he also had a chance." -- McClatchy Newspapers, April 17, 2008

Ed.: Maybe NDU could teach its DoD students not to go to war unless Congress declares it? Or is more exculpatory to blame "major debacles" on civilians like Rumsfeld (Iraq) and Johnson (Vietnam)?

"The Real McCain"

[Likely Republican presidential nominee John] McCain believes in projecting American military power abroad. So it is no wonder that the neoconservatives who pushed for war in Iraq have now regrouped around him. McCain's main foreign policy adviser is Randy Scheunemann, who was executive director of the shadowy Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. Other leading neocons on board include John Bolton, America's belligerent former UN ambassador, Bill Kristol, editor of the Neocon bible the *Weekly Standard*, and Max Boot, who has pushed for a US version of the old British Colonial Office. Another close McCain adviser is former CIA director James Woolsey, who has openly advocated bombing Syria.

Much of the dark side of John McCain lies behind the closed doors of K Street, a Washington DC boulevard lined with glitzy buildings and home to the capital's booming lobbyist industry.

A close examination of McCain's campaign workers, political allies and backers reveals a dense world of dubious loyalties, uber-lobbyists and powerful corporate interests. McCain is very much at home with K Street's sharp-suited denizens, their wealthy clients and their art of influence-peddling

Take one of McCain's closest aides and senior counsel, Charlie Black. For decades he worked as one of the most powerful lobbyists in Washington DC. His firm represented some of the most unpleasant dictators in modern history, among them the Philippines' Ferdinand Marcos and Zaire's kleptomaniac president Joseph Mobutu. Then there's Rick Davis, McCain's campaign manager. Davis, too, has been a top lobbyist. His firm's clients ranged from Ukrainian billionaire Rinat Akhmetov to telecoms giants such as Comsat and Verizon.
-- Excerpted from *The Observer/Guardian UK*, June 22, 2008

Obama, McCain and Gun Control

Likely Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama's gun record is simply atrocious.

Oh, sure, Obama told Iowa radio listeners last year that he is a "strong believer" in the rights of hunters and sportsmen, and that homeowners should have a firearm "to protect their home and their family." But then in the next breath he says, "It's hard for me to find a rationale for having a 17-clip semiautomatic [sic]."

Good thing the ban on magazines that Obama supports was not in effect during the Los Angeles riots of 1992. That's when Korean merchants successfully used their semi-autos – with large magazines containing multiple rounds – to keep looters away from their stores.

Obama supports all the existing gun control laws. As a U.S. senator his record speaks for itself. Of ten firearms- and freedom-related bills he voted anti-freedom nine times: against concealed carry, for banning many common semi-automatic firearms,

against allowing self-defense in towns where guns are banned, for one handgun a month restrictions, for requiring lock up your safety trigger locks, against protecting gun dealers from frivolous lawsuits, for squelching the free speech rights of gun owners [i.e. campaign finance reform], for restricting the interstate sale of firearms, against repealing the gun ban in Washington, DC. His one pro-freedom vote was for outlawing gun confiscations during a national emergency.

As for Senator McCain's stand on guns, Gun Owners of America gave him the following grades, on a scale of A to F:

2000	C
2002	C
2004	F
2006	F

-- *The Gun Owners*, April 14, 2008

The Dirty Dozen

How 12 Supreme Court Cases Radically Expanded Government and Eroded Freedom

By Robert A. Levy and William Mellor

The Dirty Dozen is an unprecedented analysis of 12 U.S. Supreme Court cases that changed the course of American history by growing government and harming the constitutional rights of individuals. *The Dirty Dozen* reveals the ongoing impact of these cases on free speech, economic liberty, property rights, private contracts, welfare, imprisonment without charge, and much more.

Levy and Mellor ask, "If America is truly the Land of the Free, should we have to ask for government permission to participate in an election? Or pursue an honest occupation? And should our government be empowered to take someone's home only to turn the property over to others for their private use?"

They answer unequivocally, "Of course not," then take the reader through the sad state of America's current jurisprudence pointing the way for judges, justices and legal advocates who are inclined to follow a path to greater freedom.

The Supreme Court has

behaved in a manner that would have stunned, mystified and outraged our Founding Fathers. Since the New Deal, the Court has expanded the reach of government and restrained the rights of individuals. The following are among the cases featured in *The Dirty Dozen*:

Helvering v. Davis (1937) allowed the federal government to tax and spend for the "general welfare," thereby opening the floodgates of the redistributive state – taking money from some and giving it to others, without any meaningful constitutional constraints.

Wickard v. Filburn (1942) let Congress use the Interstate Commerce Clause to restrict activities that are neither interstate or commerce, thus extending federal regulatory authority to nearly every productive activity and eviscerating the principle that federal powers are limited to those enumerated in the Constitution.

Kelo v. City of New Haven (2005) declared that the government can seize private property and transfer it to another private owner, providing one more deplorable example of eroding property rights. The decision permitted local planners to run roughshod over isolated and vulnerable members of society.

Levy said, "The Court's primary responsibility is to secure individual rights and guarantee a federal government of limited and enumerated powers. Sadly, that's not what the Court has done since the New Deal. It's time to restore constitutional government."

Mellor reminds readers, "Judicial activism created new constitutional rights out of whole cloth and erased rights that are constitutionally protected. Only principled and consistent judicial engagement can restore proper respect for the Constitution as it was written."

The Dirty Dozen (Sentinel, \$25.95) is available in bookstores across the country and through Amazon.com.

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